

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CEQ-02 CIAE-00 COA-02 COME-00

DODE-00 EB-11 EPA-04 INR-10 IO-13 L-03 NSF-04 NSC-10

NSAE-00 PM-07 RSC-01 SCI-06 SS-15 SPC-03 DRC-01

ACDA-19 SCEM-02 /159 W

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R 121719Z SEP 73

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5718

AEC GERMANTOWN 851

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE EC BRUSSELS 5196

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, SENV, US, GW

SUBJECT: US/FRG REACTOR SAFETY COOPERATION

REF: BONN 12914

1. SUMMARY: AEC/BRUSSELSS FAVORS CONCLUSION OF US-FRG REACTOR SAFETY EXCHANGE ARRANGEMENT, BUT NOT UNDER UMBRELLA OF ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENT, AS FAVORED BY FRG AND ENDORSED BY EMBASSY/ BONN. ENDSUMMARY

2. AEC/BRUSSELS DOES NOT AGREE WITH BONN'S CONCLUSION IN REFTEL THAT IT WOULD BE IN BEST INTEREST OF USG TO ENDORSE FRG SUGGESTION TO THROW REACTOR SAFETY (REGULATORY ASPECTS), REACTOR SAFETY RESEARCH, AND RADIATION PROTECTION ALONG WITH NUMBER OF OTHER SUBJECTS UNDER AEGIS OF OVERALL U.S.-GERMAN ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENT.

3. REACTOR SAFETY INCLUDES MANY CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVING DESIGN AND OPERATIONAL QUESTIONS WHICH AFFECT LIKELIHOOD AND CONSEQUENCES OF ACCIDENTS. ALLOWABLE RELEASES TO ATMOSPHERE,
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PROPERLY A CONCERN OF ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITIES, IS IN OUR VIEW, A SUBJECT WHICH CAN BE READILY HANDLED SOMEWHAT

SEPARATELY, IT IS CLOSELY TIED, MOREOVER, TO RADIATION PROTECTION STANDARDS, A SUBJECT WHICH HAS BEEN DEALT WITH FOR SOME TIME IN APPROPRIATE INTERNATIONAL FORA, AND FOR WHICH WE SEE NO NEED FOR ANY INCLUSION IN A NEW US-FRG BELATERAL.

4. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT RECENT FRG REORGANIZATION PUTS FEDERAL REGULATORY ASPECTS OF REACTOR SAFETY IN SAME MINISTRY AS ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS, THIS IS NOT SO IN MOST OTHER COUNTRIES AND CLEARLY NOT SO IN US WHERE REACTOR SAFETY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF AEC AND WOULD REMAIN THAT OF NEC AND ENDA UNDER PRESIDENT'S ENERGY PROPOSALS.

5. AEC/BRUSSELS DOES FAVOR CONCLUSION OF AN APPROPRIATE US-FRG AGREEMENT IN THE REACTOR SAFETY FIELD. DISCUSSIONS HAVE ALREADY OCCURRED BETWEEN THE USAEC AND FRG TOWARD SUCH AN AGREEMENT. WE VIEW THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A GENUINE INTERCHANGE ON NEARLY EQUAL LEVELS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE THE MOST ADVANCED THINKING ON THE SAFETY OF LIGHT WATER REACTORS. IF SAFETY IS TO BE A FACTOR IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION FOR REACTOR SALES, AS INDEED IT IS, IT WOULD BE WELL IF THE REGULATORS ON BOTH SIDES AT LEAST UNDERSTOOD THE RATIONALE OF THEIR COUNTERPARTS, WHETHER OR NOT THEY CAN AGREE ON IT. IN ADDITION, WE VIEW REACTOR SAFETY RESEARCH AS A CLOSELY RELATED FIELD FOR EXCHANGING INFORMATION, AND BELIEVE THIS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED EITHER VIA THE SAME AGREEMENT OR A SEPARATE ONE INASMUCH AS THE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THIS ARE SEPARATED BOTH IN THE U.S. AND IN THE FRG.

6. FINALLY, WE WONDER WHETHER ANOTHER GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD IS NECESSARY AND BELIEVE AN AGENCY-TO-AGENCY AGREEMENT IS SIMPLER AND ALL THAT IS NEEDED, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE NUCLEAR COOPERATION UMBRELLA PROVIDED BY THE ALREADY EXISTING US-EURATOM AGREEMENT, WITH WHICH ANY NEW US-FRG AGREEMENT WOULD NEED TO BE RECONCILED. ALSO, THE REACTOR INDUSTRY IN THE US AND FRG IS MAINLY IN PRIVATE INDUSTRY AND FORMALIZED EXCHANGES WOULD BE COMPLICATED BY PROPRIETARY INTERESTS ON BOTH SIDES. GREENWALD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR ENERGY, MONITORING, AGREEMENTS, NUCLEAR REACTORS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973ECBRU05196
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: EC BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730940/aaaabdpu.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BONN 12914
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29-Aug-2001 by elyme>; APPROVED <02-Nov-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US/FRG REACTOR SAFETY COOPERATION
TAGS: TECH, SENV, US, GE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005